

An EXPRESS from the KNIGHTS and GENTLEMEN now engaged with Sir GEORGE BOOTH;
To the CITY and CITIZENS of LONDON, And all other Free-men of ENGLAND.

Worthy Citizens and all other our English Free-men and Brethren,

AS we are English-men we are all incorporated into one Body, and though distinct and different Families, Fortunes, and Qualities, yet Fellow Members and Coheires of one and the same Birthright; not only by nature, as we are the Sons of men, (nature obliging all in one Common and equal Bond of Freedom and Unity,) but by certain sacred Laws and Customs of peculiar and inherent Right to this Nation; generally, equally, and impartially to all, without respect of Persons, Rank, Quality, or Degree; derived through all successions of Ages, by the Blood, Justice and Prudence of our fore-Fathers to us their posterity, as Ours, and the Right of our Children after us, not Disinheritable: Though this Age were wholly made up of Apostates and Traytors to Common Justice and Freedom, and should make sale of, and deliver up their Children as Slaves and Vassals, yet English Right abideth, to wit our Just Lawes and Liberties, and may Justly be reinforced as Opportunity may present; Sometime they Sleep but never Dye, their totall Extinguishment is not to be imagined so long as any English-man or English-blood abideth: and whoever undertaketh, (though by Armes or otherwise) their Recovery and Redemption is justified in that very Action by the Laws of God, of Nations, Nature, Reason, and by the Laws of the Land, and within the Bowels of our Nation amongst our selves no War can be justified, but upon that Score, the contrary is Sedition, Murder, Treason, Tyranny and what not, and the Instruments thereof no other in the Eye of English Freedom and Right, but as Beasts, Wolves, and other Beasts of Prey.

Now right Worthy and Noble Citizens, and all other our English Brethren, let us consider and lay to heart the Sad and Deplorable condition of our native Countrey: Oppression, Injustice, and Tyranny reigneth; Division, Discord and Dissimulation fomented and fostered; Trade and Industry discouraged, our Land rent into Parties and Factions, and the Common Band of Unity Cancel'd, our Fundamentall Laws supplanted, High Courts of Justice introduced, the Blood of War shed in times of Peace; Arbitrary and Illegal Imprisonments, Patents, Monopolies, Excise, and other Payments brought upon us, and continued contrary to Magna Charta, and the Petition of Right; no forme or face of Government of English Constitution amongst us; the name and Authority of the People in Parliament Usurped and Abused, and the Stamp thereof put upon Strange and Prodigious Actions, Vexing and Oppressing the People with dayly Changes and Alterations in Government, as the interest of some Few Ambitious Grandees alter and change, or get Advantages one of another; and all under the Name of a Common-wealth, when as the Nature is not practised or intended at all, it being utterly inconsistent with their very Temper and Interest; they are wrapt up and compounded of nothing but Guilt, Blood and Tyranny; and Equall and Common Justice (the Essence of a Common-wealth) are utterly repugnant thereto; and whatsoever they can doe must be Planted and Maintained by Sword and Violence against the very Heart and Sence of the Nation; and they know not where nor how to centre an Oligarchy or something they would have to be Masters of the People, and Perpetuate their Power and Tyranny, and therefore would Amaze and Confound us with their New Debates of a Coordinate Power or Senate for Life, such as our English Lawes and Liberties know not of, and of pernicious Consequence to this Nation; So that from these men that thus handle the Sterne at Westminster, there is no expectation of any Just Settlement of Peace or freedom from Oppression; especially considering the Apostacy, Hypocrisie, Deceit and Perjury of those Men, their manifold Solenne Engagements, Oaths, Vows, Protestations, Appeals unto Heaven, Promises, Remonstrances, Declarations all by them broken again and again, never keeping Faith, True or Oath, being Untounded, Unlimited, Certain to nothing, not to be held either by the Law of God, of Man, of Conscience or Reason; And from such Persons in Government good Lord deliver us, and all the good people in England; and that all this is true of them, your Consciences Noble Citizens, and all other the Free People of England can witness, there is no Tongue, no Pen is able to Vindicate them in this Point, it is known of all, owned by all, and can be denied by none; how then can any Honest or Just man shed any Blood in their Quarrell, or lend them Assistance? surely that Blood will be required at their hands, and we doubt not but you will be careful what you do.

And therefore from those Considerations and Just Provocations we have taken up Armes in Pursuance of, and Inquisition after our Government, Laws, and Liberties, that every English-man may be Protected and Secured in his Religion, Liberty, and Property; and though it may be suggested, that we intend to introduce Persecution for Conscience into the Land again, we doe hereby (in the presence of Almighty God) Protest and Declare against all Coercive power in matters of Religion, and that to the utmost of our Strength (through Gods Assistance) we will endeavour to the hazzard of our Blood and Fortunes the Freedom and Protection of all Virtuous and Religious People, by what Name soever differenced from Us, equally with our Selves: And that no Forraign or other Authority save only the Civil be Exercised in England: That the Practise of the Law be Reformed; all Corrupt Statutes Repealed; Annuall Elections of all Officers and Magistrates, with the constant Succession of Parliaments restored; our Fundamentall Laws cleared and asserted, and whatever is contrary thereto be abolished: That no Tryals be admitted in England for Life, Limb, Liberty or Estate but by the good old way of Juries, and that they be restored to their Original power and purity: That all Extrajudicial and Illegal proceedings by High-Courts of Justice, or otherwise, with all Illegal and Arbitrary Committees be strictly provided against: That the Excise, and all other Payments and Taxes such as our Ancestors never knew of, together with all Monopolies and Patents destructive to Trade and the Common good of the Nation be also abolished: And that our Parliaments and Magistrates be secured from all Force and Violence; and utterly cleared from all boundlesse Prerogative, and unlimited Priviledge: That the Right of the Poor in the Commons of England, all Donations for Charitable Uses, and all Lands formerly belonging to the People be restored again: And that Mercy and Justice be truly established amongst us. And for these ends and what else may be of publick good to the Nation, we do desire, and indeed challenge as of English Right, the speedy Election of a New Free Parliament.

And thus, most Noble Citizens, Brethren and fellow Free-men of England, we have dealt Truly and Plainly with you, and given you the reall Grounds and Reasons of our Taking up Arms; looking upon you as the most concern'd in the Nation, and therefore hold our selves the more obliged to give you this Early Advice of our Candid and Just Intentions in this Undertaking, that you may not be Deluded or Frighted (though falsely) into any strange Opinion of us, either through your own mistake, or by the Policy of those men who will leave no means unattempted to render us as Publick Enemies, Rebels and Traitors, Plunderers, Tyrants and Persecutors, or what ever is Odious and Monstrous, to engage you in Blood.

Believe us, Right worthy Citizens, and Free-borne English Brethren, we have no Designe of Fire or Sword, or Evil toward you or your City; or any part of the Nation, or any Person in it: We know there are thousands amongst you that are satisfied in us; It may be indeed that many or most of the Gathered Seperate Churches may be Fearfull and Jealous of us, and so may be induced to Arms against us; but we do again and again protest before Almighty God, and the whole World, that we have no other purpose towards them, but that they with us, and we with them, may be bound up as Friends and Brethren in the Common Cause of our Countrey, that every English-man may have English Freedom and Right; and we doe not desire to wrong either Man, Woman or Child the worth of a Shooe-latchet: Therefore we hope you will first well advise before you proceed in a new War, lest you bring not only your own, but others Blood on your Heads (for we are resolved to prosecute this to the last drop of our Blood.) The Case of England is laid before you, our Laws and Liberties, they are Yours as well as Ours, and for which we have all engaged in the first War, and not to be so slightly valued as to be set at Stake against the Private Ends of some Ambitious and Corrupt Persons; *Salus Populi, Suprema Lex*; Let the People Live, and their Enemies Perish.

Therefore we beseech you, we conjure you as English-men, to stand by your Native Countrey, and your Countreys Cause: Our voyce is, and it is no other than the Consent and Voyce of the People, A New Free Parliament, A New Free Parliament; it is the English-mans Main Birthright, which we are resolved to put the People in possession of, or to perish with our Swords in our hands. But if you will not joyn, but degenerate, we hope notwithstanding (by Gods Blessing) to carry on this Work: Yet to that Just and Glorious Work we may challenge your Concurrance, it being your Duty as well as ours to endeavour the procurement thereof. And therefore to you make it our Proposall, to your Militia, to the Army, and the whole People, for the prevention of a New War, and the effusion of English Blood, that you would be instrumentall with us for the speedy Election of a New Free Parliament, for the ends aforesaid; and in the Interim all Hostility to be forbore; and that a day may be appointed, and the People suffered to goe to their free Elections, and we shall quietly submit to their Authority; heartily desiring all Revenge, Division, Rancor, and Animosity of spirit may be for ever buried in one Generall Act of Oblivion; And that all Parties, Sects, and Sorts (now jarring, and making up interests one against another) may Reconcile, Cement, and Concenter in the common Brotherhood of English Freedom and Right; in and for which we are.

Sir GEORGE BOOTH To a Friend of his in LONDON.

SIR
MY last to you of the Second Instant I understand you have committed to open view, the Publication whereof was of Generall Satisfaction to your Friends here, and for which we all hold our selves obliged. I have sent you here inclosed An Express from the Knights and Gentlemen engaged with me, and beg this farther addition to your for ner many Favours, that you would please to take the care upon you, to get the same printed and published, for the undeceiving of those amongst you, and all other that are yet doubtful or unsatisfied in us. This Messenger will informe you of the present State and Condition of Affairs with us to whom I refer you. In hast I rest,

Manchester Aug. 9.
1659.

SIR

Your most affectionate Friend and Servant

GEORGE BOOTH.